

REMARKS

A petition to extend the time for response by three (3) months is enclosed herewith.

Claim 19 is currently amended. Claims 1 – 18, 26, 30, and 31 are canceled. Claims 19 – 25, 27 – 29, and 32 – 39 are currently pending in the present application.

Claims 32 - 36 are rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by McManus (US 4,736,971). Claims 2, 4 – 17, 19 – 29, and 39 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemelson (US 3,788,500) in view of Richardson (US 5,161,934). Claims 37 and 38 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over McManus (US 4,736,971) in view of Lemelson (US 3,788,500).

Claim 19 as currently amended recites an apparatus for at least one of loading and unloading goods units to and from a transport compartment in a loading and unloading direction, the goods units having a base. The apparatus recited in Claim 19 as currently amended includes at least one conveying unit being at least partly inserted into the transport compartment and simultaneously conveying a plurality of goods units therein. The at least one conveying unit has at least two gripping units, a crossmember, at least two lifting units and at least one guide and support unit. Each gripping unit includes two legs movable with respect to one another, the goods units being clamped between the two legs when the gripping unit engages the goods units. The at least two lifting units are operable to lift the goods units off of their base in a vertical direction perpendicular to the loading and unloading direction. The at least one guide and support unit is operatively connected to the gripping units. Also, as recited in Claim 19 as currently amended, the gripping units are mounted via the at least one guide and support unit to the crossmember, the crossmember and the at least one guide and support unit cooperating together to permit movement of the

gripping units relative to the crossmember in a transverse direction that is perpendicular with respect to both the loading and unloading direction and the vertical direction.

The prior art does not disclose an apparatus for at least one of loading and unloading goods units to and from a transport compartment as recited in Claim 19 as currently amended. For example, none of the cited prior art McManus (US 4,736,971), Lemelson (US 3,788,500), or Richardson (US 5,161,934) teach or disclose a crossmember and a guide and support unit cooperating together to permit movement of a gripping unit relative to the crossmember in a transverse direction that is perpendicular with both the loading and unloading direction and the vertical direction.

Claims 18 – 25 and 27 – 29 depend from Claim 19 and should be allowed for the same reasons and also because each recites additional patentable subject matter.

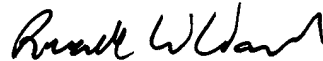
Claim 32 recites an apparatus for at least one of loading and unloading goods units to and from a transport compartment, the apparatus comprising: a support beam extending in a substantially horizontal direction; a crossbeam extending in a direction substantially transverse to the support beam and having a first end and a second end disposed opposite the first end; a first leg connected to the first end of the cross beam and extending downwardly in a substantially vertical direction from the crossbeam; a second leg connected to the second end of the cross beam and extending downwardly in a substantially vertical direction from the crossbeam, the first and second legs being movable toward one another to clamp the goods units and away from one another to release the goods units; and a hydraulic cylinder connecting the crossbeam to the support beam, the cylinder being movable between a retracted condition, in which the crossbeam is moved toward the support beam to lift the goods units, and an extended condition, in which the crossbeam is moved away from the support beam to lower the goods units.

The prior art does not disclose an apparatus for at least one of loading and unloading goods units to and from a transport compartment as recited in Claim 32. Therefore, Claim 32 allowable. Claims 33-38 depend from Claim 32 and should be allowed for the same reasons and also because each recites additional patentable subject matter.

Russell W. Warnock

Name of Attorney Signing

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russell W. Warnock", with a stylized flourish at the end.

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